

## House Republican Press Release

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### **Rep. Wasserman: Bond Commission Approves Funding for Horse Guard Barn; Canine Training Facility**



The State Bond Commission today approved funding for infrastructure improvements to the horse guard barn and to help pay construction costs for a canine training facility, both of which are located on the Fairfield Hills property in Newtown, said state Representative Julia B. Wasserman, R-106th District, who has been working to secure funding for the projects for several years.

The grants include \$293,300 for the horse barn project and \$187,000 for the canine training facility.

“The infrastructure improvements to the horse barn that this grant will make possible will make the facility safer and more user friendly for the 2nd Company of the Governor’s Horse Guard,” Representative Wasserman said. “The Horse Guard is actively involved in a variety of community activities in Newtown and puts on a lot of programs for young people, including a horse show that took place about a week ago and attracted visitors from throughout Connecticut.”

“When the canine training facility is completed this fall and the military working dog teams become operational, it will be one of only a few such units in the United States. In addition to assisting the State Police from time to time, the teams also will be involved in bomb and drug detection activities. The working dog teams will save lives and enhance public safety in Connecticut. I’m very pleased that the Bond Commission will be acting on these grants at its monthly meeting on Friday,” Representative Wasserman said.

“This funding will help us with needed improvements to the horse barn and to finish work on the canine training facility. It will posture the Connecticut National Guard to meet both federal and state missions - not only with the horse guard but also with the military working dogs that will be housed at the facility. The team will be another asset the governor will have at her fingertips for various state missions. It’s a great step forward,” said Lt. Col. John R. Whitford, Public Affairs Officer for the Connecticut National Guard.

The military working dog team will be a unit within the Connecticut National Guard and will work with the State Police if they need additional support during an emergency. A \$2,352,000 federal grant has already been received, which enabled construction of the facility to get underway about eight months ago. The state’s share of the cost will be used to complete construction of the facility, Lt. Col. Whitford said.

Construction of the canine training facility, which got underway about eight months ago, is expected to be completed in November. The facility will house a military working dog team consisting of six dogs and six individuals who will work with the animals. The dogs will be housed and trained at the facility. A full-time person will be stationed there to feed and care for them. The dogs will be involved in state and federal search and rescue and search and recovery missions as well as counter-drug operations and bomb detection, Lt. Col. Whitford said.

The horse barn project includes:

- Preparation of a master plan for the proposed current and future use of the property.
- A study of the current infrastructure and utilities and designs for upgrades and / or replacements.
- Design and construction of an independent electrical distribution system.
- Implementation of other utility infrastructure improvements.